

Empowering Adult Learners for a Post Subsidy Economy: The Imperative of Multi-Skill Acquisition for Learners' Self Reliance in Abia State.

Arisah, C. G.
arisachiz119@gmail.com

&

Obiozor, O.R

Department of Adult and Continuing Education, College of Education, Michael Okpara
University of Agriculture Umudike

Abstract

The study examined empowering adult learners for a post subsidy economy: The imperative of multi-skill acquisition for learners 'self-reliance in Abia State. Two research questions guided the study and the study adopted descriptive survey research design and was conducted in Abia State. The population was 4352 consisting of 3901 adult learners and 451 facilitators. A sample size of 366 respondent from all the Local governments in Abia State was used for the study. Taro Yamen formula was used for the determination of sample size while two staged sampling technique was employed to select the respondents for the study. The instrument for data collection was "Empowering Adult Learners for a Post Subsidy Economy Questionnaire" (EALPSEQ) structured by the researcher. The instrument was validated by 3 expert while the reliability of the instrument was established using Crombach Alpha (.702). The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. The result of the analysis revealed that increase in household expenses among other factors are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State. The study further revealed that increase in employment opportunities among others are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State. The researcher recommended among other that Government and educational stakeholder should create programmes, interventions, seminars, and workshops to enlighten the people especially adult learners on the need for the removal of fuel subsidies and actions needed to be taken to cushion the effects of fuel subsidies on the people.

Keywords: Empowering, Adult learners, Fuel Subsidy removal, Multi-skill acquisition, Self-reliance, Post Subsidy Economy.

Introduction

Empowering adult learners involves the process of ensuring increased capacity of adult learners through the adaption of diverse career opportunities that necessitates mastery of skills and ensures resilience or self-reliant in dwindling economy. According to European Commission (EC) (2020), empowerment is intrinsically connected to adult learning, both as means (condition) and as the aim of learning (objective) learning. Therefore, adult learning policies will have to be able to both support the development of empowerment, as well as build upon it to solve dispositional, situational and institutional barriers for learning. Thus, empowerment plays a role in all adult learning related activities or in other words, in the entire adult learning pathway. From first (re-encounter with learning, to becoming a lifelong learner. And this learning related activities can function better in an organized educational setting.

Adult education and skill development are critical for empowering individuals who may have missed traditional educational opportunities. Multi-skill acquisition programs tailored to adult learners can address specific educational gaps and provide practical, marketable skills that enhance their socio-economic status. Hornby (2010) points out that adult education, particularly when it includes multi-skill acquisition, can lead to greater self-reliance and social mobility. This empowerment is crucial in a post-subsidy environment where individuals must navigate new economic realities.

Education serves as a cornerstone in the formation of individuals and the advancement of society. According to Enoh (2016), pivotal role of education lies in supplying the requisite human resources upon which other developmental initiatives hinge. In essence, education acts as a catalyst for progress, empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to drive societal growth and innovation. Ocho (2015) further underscores this by characterizing education as a dynamic process that not only integrates individuals into their communities but also foster personal development and societal contribution. Through education, individuals not only acquire knowledge but also uncover and harness their innate potentials, thus fulfilling their aspirations while simultaneously serving the collective good. Moreover, education equips individual with the tools to navigate the complexities of life and address its myriad challenges.

Furthermore, the transformative power of education extends beyond the individual to encompass broader societal development. By nurturing a skilled and knowledgeable work force, education fuels economic growth and promotes social cohesion. Ocho (2015) reiterates the

societal dimension of education, highlighting its role in fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose among citizens. Thus, education serves as a Linchpin for sustainable development, facilitating the creation of inclusive and resilient societies capable of meeting the challenges of the present while laying the ground work for a prosperous future. Hence, education stands as a cornerstone of human progress, shaping individuals and societies alike, by imparting knowledge, nurturing skills and fostering personal and societal development, education lays the foundation for a more prosperous and equitable world. As emphasized by Enoh (2016) and Ocho (2005), the true measure of education lies not only in its ability to empower individuals but also in its capacity to catalyze collective advancement and ensure the well-being of future generations. In the Nigerian educational sector and among educational scholars, much has been said about conventional education, with little or no emphasis about adult education. However, adult education is also a very important area that needs our attention because there are people who for one reason or other missed the opportunity to pursue formal education at their younger age.

According to Enoh (2016), pivotal role of education lies in supplying the requisite human resources upon which other developmental initiatives hinge. In essence, education acts as a catalyst for progress, empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to drive societal growth and innovation. Ocho (2015) further underscores this by characterizing education as a dynamic process that not only integrates individuals into their communities but also fosters personal development and societal contribution. Through education, individuals not only acquire knowledge but also uncover and harness their innate potentials, thus fulfilling their aspirations while simultaneously serving the collective good. Moreover, education equips individuals with the tools to navigate the complexities of life and address its myriad challenges.

Furthermore, the transformative power of education extends beyond the individual to encompass broader societal development. By nurturing a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, education fuels economic growth and promotes social cohesion. Ocho (2015) emphasizes the societal dimension of education, highlighting its role in fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose among citizens. Thus, education serves as a linchpin for sustainable development, facilitating the creation of inclusive and resilient societies capable of meeting the challenges of the present while laying the groundwork for a prosperous future. Hence, education stands as a cornerstone of human progress, shaping individuals and societies alike. By imparting knowledge, nurturing skills, and fostering personal and societal development, education lays

the foundation for a more prosperous and equitable world. As emphasized by Enoch (2016) and Ocho (2005), the true measure of education lies not only in its ability to empower individuals but also in its capacity to catalyze collective advancement and ensure the well-being of future generations.

An Adult learner is a very essential resource in teaching and learning process of Adult education sub sector; which could be formal or non-formal; learner therefore could be a youth or an adult in formal school setting (Tertiary Institution) or a person above formal basic school age that enrolled in non-formal education for an opportunity to remedy his/her deficiency in knowledge due to not been opportuned in the past to attend school or for school learners who could not complete school due to eventualities, emanated from demise of parents, war, insurgency, early marriage, teenage pregnancy among others. In another view, Onwuadi (2018) defined an adult learner as individuals who have the zeal to update or improve their knowledge and competencies and willingly or consciously enroll to organize teaching/learning process with the intention of improving their living standard and that of the society in general. The place of adult learners in every society can never be over emphasized. In Nigeria today, many people are suffering as a result of increase in prices of commodities brought about by the removal of petroleum subsidy. Adult learners have the dual functions of taking care of their family responsibilities and also improving and updating their knowledge competencies. Hence, they are also experiencing the adverse effect of petroleum subsidy removal.

Petroleum Subsidy is a government discount on the market price of fossil fuel to make consumers pay less than the prevailing market price of fuel (Ovaga & Okechukwu, 2022). When subsidies are in place, consumers would pay below the market price per litre of the petroleum product. In May 2023, subsidy removal became a reality in Nigeria and also popular with the emergence of the present administration which is led by President Bola Tinubu (BAT) who on assumption of office pronounced the removal of petroleum subsidy, which left many households especially the lower income and middle class families in financial stress/crisis. More so, it hinders expected educational achievement due to high cost transportation and other services. The removal of Petroleum subsidy in 2023 by Nigeria government marked a pivotal moment in the Country's economic landscape, triggering significance debates and concerns about its repercussions. Globally, there are debates about Petroleum Subsidy because of its huge amount and its effect on citizens' welfare and the fiscal health of a nation. However, the removal of fossil petroleum subsidy is contentious because there is the argument that fossil Petroleum

Subsidy is a form of aid because it makes fuel more affordable for the poor. Despite these favorable arguments, a substantial body of literature highlights the negative consequences of petroleum subsidies. These include increased air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and significant forgone tax revenue etc.... (Sweeney, 2020).

Notwithstanding the above argument, the post subsidy economy in Nigeria has destabilized the economy and sheltered the hope of ordinary citizens of the nation, sparked controversies, increased crime rate and hardship in the society leading to depression, death and suicide among many, therefore, the place of education in restoring hope and development among many cannot be over emphasized. This is a period that follows the discontinuation or removal of government subsidies on certain goods and services of a given nation/place. This period is characterized with increased household expenses, rise in the cost of essential goods and service, lack of sufficient skills in financial management, increased in transportation among others. Invariably, with diversification in multiple skills the adverse effect in post subsidy economy of Nigeria will eventually turn to positive effect subsidy removal.

Government at different levels, have actively pursued initiatives aimed at addressing the rising challenges of unemployment, poverty, and social unrest through comprehensive educational policies and programs. These endeavors are specifically tailored to equip individuals with the requisite skills for self-realization and sustainable livelihoods. The National Policy on Education underscores this commitment by emphasizing the transformation of Nigerian adults into competent and productive citizens through skill acquisition. In alignment with this vision, the curriculum of adult and non-formal education programs has been diversified to accommodate varying talents, opportunities, and future roles (FGN, 2014). The emphasis on creativity within the instructional framework, as noted by Jimo (2014), reflects a concerted effort to foster innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities among adult learners leading to self-reliance among them.

Reliance stands for reliance on one's own powers and resources rather than those of others, invariably anyone that is self-reliant does (things/everything) especially decision making alone, such a person is independently capable of his/her decision making, not controlled by other people. A self-reliant man or woman is productive, proactive, reasonable, reliable and resilient. Therefore, an adult learner that becomes self-reliant would definitely become an active adult education participant and would not see any reason to withdraw from the programme due to economy changes brought about by petroleum subsidy removal. When adult learners embrace

diversified skill sets and gets empowered, they will enhance their employability, diversify their income source and they would be able to mitigate the financial impact of economic changes without complain. Also, unemployment will be a thing of the past as a trained learner could become an employer of labour. Multi-skill acquisition fosters a more versatile and resilient citizens, capable of supporting sustainable development.

The strategic focus on skill training within adult and non-formal education programs serves as a potent weapon in combating unemployment and idleness. By providing practical and industry-relevant training, these initiatives empower individuals to actively participate in the workforce and contribute meaningfully to economic growth. However, the realization of these objectives hinges upon robust support and encouragement from various stakeholders, including government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. It is imperative that concerted efforts are made to create an enabling environment for adult learners, ensuring they receive the necessary resources, guidance, and motivation to pursue their chosen career paths and achieve optimal growth. Only through collective commitment and collaboration can the full potential of adult education as a vehicle for socio-economic advancement be realized, thereby fostering inclusive development and prosperity for all segments of society.

Skill acquisition refers to the process of acquiring proficiency, expertise, and experience through learning, training, and practice. Unlike innate abilities, skills are cultivated and honed over time through deliberate effort and application of knowledge. Okafor (2010) defines skill as the demonstrated personal attributes and ability to effectively apply knowledge and competence. Elom (2006) elaborates further, describing skill as expertness, practical ability, dexterity, or tact in performing a specific activity. In essence, skill acquisition encompasses the development of practical abilities and know-how necessary for successful execution of tasks and responsibilities. In another view, Ubah (2013) explains that skill acquisition is an important aspect in all human endeavours and one's survival in life depends largely upon what one does with knowledge acquired and personal skill, the more the senses that are used in acquiring knowledge that will be retained she explain further when skill is acquired and developed in adults from conception of education, it will enable them to be self-reliant and prospective contributive members of the society.

In an ever evolving world driven by technological advancements, economic shifts and unpredictable challenges, the need for multi skill acquisition has become more critical than ever. Beyond providing individuals with the tools to adapt to diverse career opportunities, it

fosters innovations, enhances employability and ensure resilience in the face of economic disruptions. Multi-skill acquisition, as defined by Sharma and Sharma (2016), encompasses the process of acquiring proficiency across a diverse array of skills rather than specializing in a single area. This approach, rooted in the recognition of the dynamic nature of contemporary work environments, emphasizes the importance of versatility and adaptability in navigating the complexities of the modern job market. By cultivating a well-rounded skill set that includes both technical and soft skills, individuals can enhance their employability, career prospects, and resilience in the face of evolving economic and technological landscapes. Multi-skill acquisition not only enables individuals to capitalize on a broader range of opportunities but also fosters innovation and creativity by encouraging cross-disciplinary thinking and problem-solving approaches. Moreover, organizations that promote multi-skill acquisition among their workforce stand to benefit from improved employee performance, increased adaptability, and enhanced organizational agility.

These skills are highly in demand and less expensive to acquire. Examples are carpentry, electrician, plumbing, tailoring, welding, culinary art, graphic design, fashion design crafts person, hair dressing, dental hygiene, computer technician and automotive repaired, Printing, agro farming, poultry, solar installation, data processing, confectionaries, repair/maintenance of computer, weaving/knitting, food processing, mechanic works, fashion designing, catering, bead work/bead making, content creation, website designing, electronics repair, black smiting, leather manufacturing, cosmetology among others. In addition, National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) (2018) and United Nations Education and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2018) refer it as an adult education programme that is geared towards empowerment intended to compliment the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic in the form of vocational skill acquisition and entre premiership meant to improve the quality of life of learners; this explains that adult learners do not only need to learn how to read and write alone but to acquire skills so as to make positive difference in their livelihood, community and the society at large. Mabalisi and Ugwu (2015) asserted that one required reading, writing and computing of figures skills to understand his/her right to know when he/she is cheated and understand the causes, the effect, solutions and prevention of ugly incidents such as disease, accidents environmental degeneration. He further said that literacy provides opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and life practices relevant to promoting sustainable development strides, insight from the definitions are that multi-skill acquisition exposes adult learners to new opportunities to be able to thrive in the face of post- subsidy removal crisis. By

acquiring skills, learners can diversify their streams of income and open up new employments be able to navigate the effect of subsidy removal.

The imperative of multi-skill acquisition becomes particularly pronounced in the context of petroleum subsidy removal and its implications for sustainable development among adult learners. With the removal of subsidies, individuals reliant on subsidized petroleum products may face increased costs of living and reduced disposable income, thereby heightening the need for diversified skill sets to navigate economic uncertainties. Adult learners, especially those from vulnerable communities and sectors heavily impacted by subsidy removal, require versatile skills that enable them to adapt to changing market dynamics and explore alternative livelihood options. By acquiring a diverse range of skills, adult learners can enhance their employability, income-generating potential, and resilience to economic shocks, thus mitigating the adverse effects of subsidy removal on their well-being and livelihoods.

Moreover, multi-skill acquisition is instrumental in fostering sustainable development among adult learners and their communities. As subsidy removal prompts shifts in consumption patterns and economic structures, there is a growing need for individuals to engage in productive and sustainable activities that contribute to long-term socio-economic resilience. By equipping adult learners with skills relevant to emerging sectors such as renewable energy, environmental conservation, and digital technology, societies can harness their potential as agents of positive change and innovation. Furthermore, multi-skill acquisition fosters a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, enabling adult learners to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development goals of their communities and broader society.

Statement of the Problem

The removal of petroleum subsidies has far-reaching implications beyond immediate economic pressures. It has exposed deep-rooted structural issues within Nigeria's economy and labor market. One significant consequence is the strain placed on households that rely heavily on subsidized fuel for daily activities and income-generating ventures. With the sudden increase in fuel prices, many of these households face heightened financial stress, reducing their purchasing power and overall quality of life. This situation is particularly dire for low-income families, where the proportion of income spent on fuel and transportation is significantly higher.

Additionally, the removal of subsidies has exacerbated existing inequalities, disproportionately affecting those who are already marginalized. The lack of access to affordable fuel can hinder educational opportunities for children, as transportation costs become prohibitive. It can also limit access to healthcare and other essential services, further entrenching poverty and inequality. The ripple effects of these challenges can impede national development efforts, as a significant portion of the population remains unable to contribute effectively to the economy.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, with a strong emphasis on education and skill development. Multi-skill acquisition stands out as a critical strategy in this context. By equipping adult learners with a broad spectrum of skills, they can better navigate the uncertainties brought about by subsidy removal. For instance, skills in areas such as digital literacy, renewable energy, small-scale agriculture, and entrepreneurship can open up new avenues for income generation and employment. This not only helps individuals and families to become more self-reliant but also stimulates local economies and fosters community resilience. Hence, the removal of petroleum subsidies presents both challenges and opportunities for Nigeria. While it exposes significant economic vulnerabilities, it also highlights the critical need for multi-skill acquisition as a pathway to sustainable development. By investing in comprehensive and inclusive skill development programs, Nigeria can empower its citizens to overcome the adverse effects of subsidy removal, fostering a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable economy.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine empowering adult learners for a post subsidy economy: The imperative of multi-skill acquisition for sustainable development in Abia State. Specifically, the study seeks to

1. find out effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria.
2. find out benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing the sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria?
2. What are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria?

Methodology

The research design adopted was descriptive survey. The study was conducted in Abia State, Nigeria, which is located in the Southeast region of the country. The study population consisted of 4352 respondents consisting of 3901 adult learners and 451 facilitators from 189 centers across the 17 Local Governments of Abia State, comprising of 1411 males and 2490 females according to data from Abia State Agency for Mass Education (AAME, 2023). A sample size of 366 respondent from all the Local governments in Abia State was used for the study, the sample was determined using Taro Yamen's formula, which is suitable for estimating population proportions with a specified degree of accuracy.

Two staged sampling technique was employed for the study. Purposive stratified sampling, was use to divide the 189 centers into 17 distinct strata, each corresponding to the Local Government Areas in Abia state. This deliberate segmentation enabled the researcher to ensure representation from every corner of the state, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the population. Within each stratum, the researcher meticulously listed every center, taking note of their unique characteristics, such as size, location, reputation, and accessibility. The instruments used in this study was the researcher made instrument on the Empowering adult learners for a post subsidy economy: the imperative of multi-skill acquisition for a sustainable development in Abia State titled "Empowering Adult Learners for a Post Subsidy Economy Questionnaire" (EALPSEQ). The instrument was designed on a four-point rating scale weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (SA=4 points), Agree (A=3 points), Disagree (D=2 points), Strongly Disagree (SD=1 point) for positive items and vice versa for negative skewed items.

The researcher administered the instrument with the help of 3 properly briefed research assistants who are familiar with the research environment. Instructions were giving on how to complete the questionnaire in order to safeguard against errors due to misunderstanding of the question. Respondents were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire on the spot and they complied as instructed. The data from the questionnaire was coded and the responses

from the respondents analyzed using simple descriptive statistics such as the mean and standard deviation. The four-point scale was used to compute the mean.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria?

Table 4.1: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents' opinions on the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	The removal of petroleum subsidies has significantly increased my household expenses.	3.84	.597	Agree
2	Since the subsidy removal, I have experienced difficulties in affording transportation.	3.84	.597	Agree
3	The cost of essential goods and services has risen noticeably since the subsidy removal.	3.62	.675	Agree
4	The removal of petroleum subsidies have affected my ability to save money	3.62	.675	Agree
5	I have to adjust my budgeting habits due to increased fuel prices.	3.62	.675	Agree
6	The subsidy removal has affected my overall standard of living negatively.	3.62	.675	Agree
7	I believe the government should provide alternative support measures to mitigate the impact of subsidy removal on citizens.	3.62	.675	Agree
8	I have not experienced difficulties in affording transportation since the removal of fuel subsidy	1.65	1.035	Disagree
Group Mean		3.45	.6967	Agree

Data in table 4.1 show that the mean responses of all the items except item 9 fall within the real limit of 2.450-3.49. Also the grand mean value of 2.94 which is within the real limit of 2.50-3.49, indicates that all the respondents agreed that increased my household expenses, difficulties in affording

transportation, inability to save money, rise in the cost of essential goods and services, inability to budget and sustain the budget, negative effect on standard of living, non-availability of supports from the government and are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria. The table further revealed that the cluster standard deviation of the items was .698. This also shows that the respondents were not far from the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria adding further validity to the mean.

Research Question Two: What are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria?

Table 4.3: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents' opinions on the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Acquiring multiple skills has increased my employability opportunity in diversified sectors.	3.40	.678	
2	Acquiring multiple skills has significantly improved my earning potentials compared to specializing in one area.	3.09	.861	
3	Despite acquiring multiple skills, I feel less secured in my career compared to those who specialized in a single field.	2.57	.817	
4	Multi-skill acquisition has improved my ability to adapt to changes in the job market.	3.27	.553	
5	I have encountered little difficulties in finding jobs that value a diversified skill set over specialized skill expertise.	3.07	1.009	
6	I believe multi-skill acquisition contributes to economic resilience during economic fluctuations.	3.44	.683	
7	Acquiring multiple skills has enhanced my entrepreneurial capabilities.	3.70	.565	
8	Multi-skill acquisition has helped in reducing unemployment rates.	3.52	.669	
9	I have observed a positive impact of multi-skill acquisition on community development	3.26	1.045	
Group Mean Scores		3.26	.764	

Data in table 4.3 show that the mean responses of all the items fall within the real limit of 2.450-3.49. Also the grand mean value of 3.26 which is within the real limit of 2.50-3.49, indicates that all the respondents

agreed that increase in employment opportunities, improve in earning potentials, career security, ability to adapt to new changes in the job market, acquisition of multiple skills to cater for the present requirements of the job markets, economic resilience during economic fluctuation, enhancement in entrepreneurial capabilities, reducing unemployment rates and positive impact on community development are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria. The table further revealed that the cluster standard deviation of the items was .764. This also shows that the respondents were not far from the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria adding further validity to the mean.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study shows that increased in household expenses, difficulties in affording transportation, inability to save money, rise in the cost of essential goods and services, inability to budget and sustain the budget, negative effect on standard of living, non-availability of supports from the government and are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Onyeizugbe & Onwuka (2012) on the impact of petroleum subsidy removal on business development and job creation in Nigeria which revealed that while subsidy removal is essential for business development, the government should implement programs to create more jobs, support the subsidy removal with robust policies, and encourage further research to ensure program success.

Furthermore, findings from the study revealed that increase in employment opportunities, improve in earning potentials, career security, ability to adapt to new changes in the job market, acquisition of multiple skills to cater for the present requirements of the job markets, economic resilience during economic fluctuation, enhancement in entrepreneurial capabilities, reducing unemployment rates and positive impact on community development are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria. This validates the findings of Oyebanji, Adedara, Jelili, & Soares (2023) on the relationship between skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development. Their findings indicated a significantly strong positive relationship between skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development ($r = 0.879$), and between practical entrepreneurship development and employability ($r = 0.899$).

Conclusion

Increased in household expenses, difficulties in affording transportation, inability to save money, rise in the cost of essential goods and services, inability to budget and sustain the budget, negative effect on standard of living, non-availability of supports from the government are the effects of petroleum subsidy removal on the economic and daily lives of adult learners in Abia State, Nigeria. Additionally, Increase in employment opportunities, improve in earning potentials, career security, ability to adapt to new changes in the job market, acquisition of multiple skills to cater for the present requirements of the job markets, economic resilience during economic fluctuation, enhancement in entrepreneurial capabilities, reducing unemployment rates and positive impact on community development are the benefits of multi-skill acquisition as a strategy for enhancing sustainable development in Abia State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and educational implications of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government and educational stakeholder should create, programs, interventions, seminars, and workshop to enlighten the people especially adult learners on the need for the removal of fuel subsidies and actions needed to be taken to cushion the effect of fuel subsidies on the people
2. Government, community leaders, NGOs, Religious organizations and Private enterprise should put more efforts in establishing multi skill acquisition centers. Government and NGOs can provide subsidies and grants and or soft loan to enable everyone who is interested in acquisition of skills to be able to do that without much encumbrances. This will make it possible for many adult learners to acquire multi skill for a sustainable development as an individual in particular and society in general.

REFERENCES

- Akinnibi, F. (2023). How to build wealth despite removal, Retrieved from <https://cowrise.com>
- Elom, M. (2006). The Essence of Skill in Professional Practice. *Vocational Education Journal*, 5(1), 65-79.

- Enoh, A. O. (2016). The Role of Education in Societal Development. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 12(3), 45-60.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). (2014). *National Policy on Education*. Abuja: NERDC Press.
- Jimo, A. B. (2014). Creativity in Adult Education: An Instructional Framework. *International Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 22(4), 215-230.
- Ocho, L. (2005). *Issues and concerns in Education and life*. Enugu: Institute of development studies.
- Ocho, L. O. (2015). Education and Social Integration. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 10(1), 33-48.
- Okafor, C. (2010). Unemployment and skill acquisition in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Labour Studies*, 11(2), 101-118.
- Onyeizugbe, C., & Onwuka, I. O. (2012). Fuel subsidy removal as an imperative for enhancing business development in Nigeria. *Journal of Economic Studies*, 45(3), 67-82.
- Ovega & Okechukwu E. (2022). Subsidy in the downstream oil sector and the fate of the masses in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://ijarabianjbmr.com>.
- Oyebanji, A., Adedara, A. J., Jelili, A., & Soares, L. (2023). Impact of skill acquisition on entrepreneurship development in Ogun State, Nigeria. *JABU International Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 7(2), 198.
- Sharma, R., & Sharma, R. (2016). The Importance of Multi-Skill Acquisition in Modern Work Environments. *Journal of Career Development and Employability*, 15(2), 123-137.
- Sweeney (2020). Weaponizing the number: The Hidden Agenda behind fossil fuel subsidy reform. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net>